



# State of Wisconsin **GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**November 8, 2018 – Teleconference Option**

### *Public Participation*

Jefferson County Courthouse

Jefferson, WI

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### **State Trails Council Members present**

Bryan Much, off-highway motorcycle representative (member of *Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association (WOHMA)*) [STC Chair]

Ken Neitzke, hiking representative (member of the *Ice Age Trail Alliance*) [STC Vice Chair]

John Siegert, off-road bicycling representative (member of *Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin*)

Ben Popp, cross-country skiing representative (Executive Director of American Birkebeiner)

Luana Schneider, 4-wheel drive vehicles representative (member of *Wisconsin 4-Wheel Drive Association*)

Kricket Jewett, equestrian representative (member of *Wisconsin Horse Council*)

Randy Harden, ATV/UTV representative (member of *Wisconsin ATV-UTV Association (WATVA)*)

Doug Johnson, snowmobiling representative (member of *Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC)*) [STC Secretary]

Roy Atkinson, bicycle touring/rail trail bicycling/road bicycling

Bob Fasick, *Wisconsin Department of Transportation* [non-voting]

### **State Trails Council Members not in attendance**

Skip Maletzke, tourism/business representative [non-voting]

### **Invited speakers**

Cathy Burrow (DNR)

John Pohlman (DNR)

Mary Nimm & Kevin Wiesman & Joe Nehmer (Jefferson County)

Tara LeRoy (Southern Kettle Moraine Horse Trail Association)

Caitlin Lill (DNR)

### **Others present**

Hank Wozniel

Ryan Harden

Mike Repyak

Sandy Rogers

Mark Kaczmarek

Bobbi Weinbar

### **WI DNR Staff present**

Kathryn Gehrke



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## **10:00 A.M. – Welcome and introductions**

- Much called the meeting to order. Council members and guests introduced themselves.

## **10:02 A.M. – Agenda review/repair and approval of August meeting minutes**

- Agenda repair agenda for voting
- Bryan – motion to approve
- Doug moved to approve the minutes. Randy seconded. Motion passed.

## **10:03 A.M. – Chair report**

- Travel claims FY2019 new funding codes, please use new sheet
- January 2 hour teleconference
- January we should look into Skip's position
- Review contact sheet
- 2019 meeting dates
- January 7 teleconference, April 18 in person, July 26 in person, October 24
- Bryan move, Ben second, motion passed

## **10:14 A.M. – Election of officers**

- Kathryn did not receive any nominations
- Kathryn called for nominations for Chair
  - Luana nominates Bryan, John seconds. No additional nominations.
- Kathryn called for nominations for Vice Chair
  - Bryan nominates Ken, Randy seconds. No additional nominations.
- Kathryn called for nominations for Secretary
  - Ken nominates Doug, Bryan seconds. No additional nominations.
- Kathryn motioned for all in favor of Bryan for Chair. All voted in favor, no objections.
- Kathryn motioned for all in favor of Ken for Vice Chair. All voted in favor, no objections.
- Kathryn motioned for all in favor of Doug for Secretary. All voted in favor, no objections.

## **10:15 A.M. – Information briefing about trail opportunities and initiatives in Jefferson County, Mary Nimm & Kevin Wiesman & Joe Nehmer (PPT)**

- Mission is to maintain park system that is resource orientated recreation
- Success is by design
- Snowmobiling
  - From 1981 – today 8 miles to 192 miles of trails
  - Lack of snow is making it very difficult to open the trails, 12-14 days in the past 5 years
  - Clubs and alliance own all the growing equipment
- Biking
- Glacial River Trail opened in 1996
  - 50 miles of trail, 30 miles in county
  - Mark D. from DOT helped with acquiring new land around HWY 26



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- DNR and DOT funding
- Many reservations prior to trail going in but once in community support is huge
- Primary purpose is to connect communities
- Bicycle plan has been used throughout the country
- No trail pass is allowed, DOT will not allow Jefferson Co. to sell passes as they funded much of the project
- Glacial Heritage Area
  - Focused on four topics
    - Conservation Parks
    - Linking Trails
    - River-based Conservation Areas
    - Wildlife Areas
- Discussion on connecting interurban trails to urban trails
- Issues with water trails and drainage districts that are trying to be preserved?
  - No, no current issues
- Interurban trail
  - Connect Watertown to Oconomowoc
  - First bridge crossing is happening
    - \$700,000 from stewardship, foundations, trek and other individuals
    - Bridge will not allow motorized vehicles
- Parks department builds the relationships and solicits donations
- Submitted grants for DOT TAP and were turned down twice then finally received
- Route of the Badger being discussed
- Mountain bikes
- Glacial River Mountain Bike Trails
  - Worked with IMBA to design
  - County dept organized build days and all build days were done by volunteers
  - Fleet of bikes donated to local high school so they can use in their curriculum
  - 2.5 miles of trails currently and will have 3.5 miles total on 10 acres
- Glacial Heritage Area (GHA) Recreation Opportunities
  - Watertrails – 70 put in/take out sites on 7 rivers 9 lakes
    - 160 miles of rivers/streams and 13,104 acres of open water
    - Future issues with Emerald Ash trees creating blockages
- Rock River National Watertrail
  - Designated national watertrail since 2010
  - Tough to sustain the national designation
- What happens to the snow money when there is no snow?
  - You still get reimbursed for your maintenance cost
- Working to get more horse trails in the county, working with Palmyra Group
  - Wildlife areas do not currently allow horse trails
- ATV groups are working to get roads designated as ATV trails
  - Tough to find area remote enough to get public onboard in southern Wisconsin for ATV park



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**11:20 A.M. – Lunch**

**12:00 PM – Southern Kettle Moraine Horse Trail Association, Tara LeRoy**

- Social organization of horse lovers, specifically in SKMSF
- Focus on trail and campsite improvements specific to horses
- Current membership of approximately 100 households
  - Increase by 30% since 2015
  - Most members from local area but some from Illinois
  - Members have grown when more play was added to the group
  - Local businesses sponsor member benefits
- Kettle Moraine State Forest
  - 1.3 million visitors per year
  - 7 miles in 1967 to 55+ miles today in horse trails
  - 56 horse campground sites
  - Hosts more endurance riding events than any other location in Midwest – endurance is 25, 50, 75 and 100-mile rides – 3- day event
  - Lots of trail variation and trail use
    - There are challenges in sharing the trail
- Projects – funded by Grants, WI Horse Council, UMECRA, AERC, DNR
  - 29 electric sites & pavilion at Horseriders' Campground
  - Horse corrals installed at 12 sites
  - Purchase 8 concrete manure pits
  - Install mounting blocks, hitching posts, signage & information kiosk
  - Painted shower house
  - Annual camp cleanups
  - Gravel for HWY ZZ parking lot
  - Hitching posts
  - Porta potty maintenance on trails
  - Obstacle course construction and maintenance
  - Events member specific and public
- WI DNR and SKMHTA have worked together on these improvements and increase in reservations has been seen
- \$1.28 billion to Wisconsin economy/ \$504 million to recreation sector of Wisconsin economy

**12:40 P.M. – Update on funding and current issues related to grants, Cathy Burrow**

- ATV/UTV and snow grants
- August funding meetings update
  - Snowmobile: After paid out \$5million in maintenance had \$3million for development grants (infrastructure and reroutes)
- Snow rec council:
  - Reserve \$500K for storm damage
  - Contemplating requiring that counties insure bridges



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- Allowed tracked trucks (with specific power and load requirements) to be used as groomers
- GPS of all trails
- Off Hwy Motorcycle
  - Still developing administrative codes
- ATV/UTV
  - After \$2 million in maintenance \$4.9M available to award in development grants
  - Reserved \$500K for storm damage projects
  - Dealing with limited opportunity to ride in southern part of state
- Segregated ATV/UTV, snow, OHM fund seems to be successful – why aren't other user groups doing this?
  - Imperative is to have a strong user group or it won't pass

### **1:00 P.M. – SCORP Update, John Pohlman**

- Due at end of 2018, we received our one, one-year extension so we could include the Recreation Opportunities Analysis
- Timeline for SCORP through 2018
  - Nov 8 – send draft document to Advisory Team
  - Nov 13 – Advisory Team meeting
  - Nov 27 – release draft document to public
  - Nov 27 to Dec 18 – public review period
  - Dec 11, 12 OR 13 (tbd) – public open house meeting
  - Dec 19 to 30 – changes made and administration sign-off
  - Dec 31 – send to NPS
- New SCORP survey method for this year
- SCORP is required for States to receive Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Doug will send out SCORP draft to council for comments
  - Doug will bring comments to SCORP committee November 13
- Public meeting will be announced
  - Doug will send public meeting announcement to council

### **1:30 P.M. – FEMA and storm damage update, Caitlin Lill**

- Emergency response and FEMA
- DNR makes FEMA claim when DNR is land owner – even if we have a MOU with partner
- Not 100% reimbursement by FEMA – 87.5% is reimbursed
- All FEMA claims in Department go through Caitlin
  - 4 active claims (some from past)
- \$13 million public damage from June in NW (DNR \$4.2 million)
  - 12 inches rain one or two nights
  - Currently in 60-day clock to report additional points of damage (December 14 last day)
- millions public damage SW event (DNR \$3.5 million)
  - 26 days August and September SW



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- Elroy Sparta and 400 and Hillsboro still have huge areas closed and will remain into 2019 – engineers and architects hope to get to work in spring and summer – no current estimate of when trails will reopen
- Not entered the 60-day clock
- FEMA is behind schedule in reporting due to other things going on in country
- DNR has ask DOA for gap funding until DNR receives FEMA dollars

### **2:00 P.M. – DNR Update and trail design project follow up, Kathryn Gehrke**

- Western Prairie Regional Plan – kickoff meeting to initiate public involvement and the planning process is tonight, 11/5 from 5-7 in Baldwin, WI. Public comment period is open Oct. 23-Nov. 13. The department anticipates presenting the draft plan for public review and comment in the Spring 2019 and presenting for NRB approval in August or September 2019. (Shelley Warwick lead planner)
- Superior Coastal Plain, Northwest Sands and Northwest Lowlands Regional Plans – these three regions located in the northwest part of the state are being planned concurrently. The department anticipates posting the plans for public review and comment on November 27th with public meetings held mid-December. We anticipate presenting for NRB approval in January or February 2019. (Phil Rynish and Beth Kienbaum co-planners)
- Blue Mound State Park Master Plan - the department is in the pre-planning phase of revising the BMSP master plan. We anticipate engaging the public in mid- to late January 2019. (Phil Rynish lead planner)
- Northeast Sands Regional Plan – the department anticipates posting the draft plan for public review and comment in mid- to late January with public meetings held in early February 2019. We anticipate presenting for NRB approval in April 2019. (Yoyi Steele lead planner)
- Southwest Savanna Regional Plan - the department is in the pre-planning phase of this regional plan. We anticipate engaging the public in mid- to late January 2019. (Savannah Ernzen lead planner)
- We are working with Buffalo County to develop the Winona Connector. The project is nearing final design and the County is in the process of securing land rights for the trail footprint and construction access.
- Representative from each user group to create stakeholder group for trail design specifications
  - Mountain Bike – Mike Repyak
  - ATV/UTV – Randy Harden
  - 4WD – Joel Kasper
  - Equestrian – Margie Kragie
  - Hiking – Tim Malzhan
  - Road Bike – TBD
  - Off Hwy Motorcycle – Bryan Much
  - Snowmobile – Doug Johnson
  - Cross Country Skiing – Yuriy Guser

### **2:10 P.M. – User Group Highlights, Members**



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- Doug explain Polk County Master Planning process/issues
  - Trail managed by Polk County owned by state
  - Subcommittee formed, held meetings, held public meetings
  - August finished up their recommendations
  - September environmental committee accepted recommendation and passed to county board
  - County board passed resolution which included snowmobile and horse with amendments to include ATV and UTV to the resolution
  - County is waiting on DNR approval of the process, so snowmobile group can prep trail for use this winter
  - Bob brought up issue that you may have to pay back grant in which the trail was bought with
  - Bryan says transportation enhancement grants do have lifecycle
- Ben - \$1 million project completed in Hayward
  - NRB board toured Hayward and Sawyer area to see where recreation dollars should be funded
- Roy – still talking with some bike groups to prepare for next meeting
  - President of Chippewa River State Trail Friends Group
  - Works for City of Altoona
- Ken – trails seem very busy with hikers right now, North Country and Ice Age Trail will be working through winter to repair storm damage
- Cricket – 3-day trail conference and will information from conference in soon
  - WI horse council will sponsor horse school this May
  - Governor Dodge horse group is raising money for horse campground
  - After meeting in Sturgeon Bay NRB approved horse trails in 2 Door County Parks
- Randy – trail ambassador program has been very successful and has allowed for good partnership with DNR Law Enforcement
- Luana – groups are working together in training; this year has been tough for biking due to rain
- Mike – lots of new features at CamRock, storm impacted lots of our trail, CORP started “same trails better” which is funding for existing trails, 80 communities came to a recent training, silent sport trail permits is being talked about and Colorado is the close to implementing, worked with Dayton University to do national survey
- Bobbi – RTP final grants will be available in January

### **2:45 P.M. – Public comment**

- Ryan – member of Rangler Rider Club 4WD which is part of Road Legal 4WD Club
  - 1-3MPH/slow speed trails
  - Buy into membership annually then you can visit these properties
  - 259 members
  - Working with Cameron Bump on pilot areas, trying to build program similar to ATV/UTV
  - 2019 having VIP weekend
  - Many group rides to target new riders



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### **2:55 P.M. – Future agenda topics**

- North Country Trail
- PALs/mapping issue
- Discussion of Tourism seat
- Visuals of storm damage

### **3:00 P.M. – Adjourn**

- Motion to adjourn by Luana. Seconded by Doug. All approved. Meeting adjourned.

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## **Appendix – User Group Reports (submitted before meeting by Council Members)**

### **STC User Group Reports –**

#### **Cross-Country Ski**

Many XC ski venues are eagerly awaiting snow at this point. Lots of trail preparation and clearing as the season nears.

- **Eau Claire Area Ski Trails:**

- A new youth x-c ski terrain park is being happening! It is being constructed as we speak and will be ready for kids this winter! It will be a great place for kids to play around and fall in love with being active, outside!
- **Ski trail lighting upgrade and expansion:** A ski trail lighting upgrade and expansion project is underway this summer at Tower Ridge ski area in Eau Claire by the Eau Claire Ski Striders ski club. All the current lights on the ~2.5k of trail are being upgraded to LED, and expansion of the LED lighting will be completed on another 1k of trail. This will provide additional lighted trail for skiers in the evening, more options for evening races and events, and additional room and areas for the Kickin' Kids youth program to utilize for the 150 youth skiers it provides lessons to on Monday evenings in winter at Tower Ridge.

- **Rhineland Area:**

- The ski area in Rhineland, CAVOC has been working to be able to host higher level events and is going through the process of getting their trails Homologated through FIS/ US Ski and Snowboard. They should be ready by snowfall and will begin to bid for some larger events! The process is making day to day skiing even better for all as well!

- **American Birkebeiner / Hayward Area**

- Hayward Town park is installing a new biathlon range in an old gravel pit adjacent the park. Biathlon targets will be installed and the American Birkebeiner will be running programming at the venue





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- A new 112' pedestrian/ski/bike bridge was installed over Cty Hwy OO in September and is now open. It allows for the over 100,000 users a year to cross the dangerous road/trail intersection safely!
- A new community center at the OO trail head will be completed in November and open to the public by Dec 1.
- ABSF is working on a 2km snowmaking loop at the start of the American Birkebeiner – the hope is to be open by Thanksgiving
- **Green Bay Area**
  - This in from the Green Bay area/Bay Nordic: More volunteer grooming which should make for more timely grooming and more sustainable tracks at Reforestation Camp. Bay Nordic also facilitated longer shelter hours making night skiing more available on our 4.5 LED lit trail. Ongoing trail repair and improvement has been going on this summer. Brown County has limited funds so volunteerism is key to maintaining and improving conditions. Hilly Haven Winter Recreation has had skiing for over 35 years but it is off most peoples radar. With some energy it is reemerging! Smaller venue but fun for all levels! Lakewood trails (68 minutes from GB) continue to be improved. Minimal facilities but phenomenal skiing.
- **Milwaukee Area**
  - Lapham Peak and Southeast Wisconsin

(From Journal Sentinel)

This year's winter weather outlook points to warmer-than-average temperatures and less precipitation for southern Wisconsin. That's the type of El Nino weather pattern predicted for the winter of 2018-'19 that frustrates cross-country skiers.

But some good news:

A \$116,000 donation will boost the length of a heavily used trail loop at Lapham Peak State Park near Delafield that can be covered with artificial snow.

The donation by the Friends of Lapham Peak was approved on Wednesday in Madison by the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board.

The funds will increase the length of the loop from about 1.5 miles to about 1.8 miles, according to John McCarthy of the friends group.

Cross-Country skiing trails at Lapham Peak State Park near Delafield. (Photo: Submitted)

Snow-making has proved invaluable to skiers in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois in search of snow-groomed trails, and the extra length of the trail should be popular with them.

Natural conditions the past two years have not been good for cross-country skiers in the region. Last winter, McCarthy said, there were only nine days of suitable skiing in the southern unit of Kettle Moraine, of which Lapham Peak is a part.



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But the loop and its man-made snow offered about 80 days of skiing, extending into early March, he said.

RELATED: Ice Castles coming to Lake Geneva this winter

Lapham Peak draws more than 100,000 cross-country skiers annually, largely because of the reliability of snow.

The donations will pay for a snow-making machine, water piping and electrical cabling.

Snow is made when temperatures fall sufficiently below freezing. It's stockpiled and then spread over the course.

The Friends of Lapham Peak have raised more than \$600,000 for cross-country skiing at the park since 2005.

- **Central Cross-Country Skiing (Regional Governing Body under US Ski & Snowboard)**
  - Nordic Rocks program continues to expand and provide skis to elementary schools and clubs.
  - With funding help from a VA grant, CXC Adaptive program will be bringing a large group of veterans to the Birkie Adaptive ski this February – providing a unique opportunity to the group.
- **Madison Area**
  - Madison Area Nordic Ski Club continue with the plan of creating a 1.5-2.5km man-made ski loop for this winter at Elver Park. Working on the long-term plan with Madison city parks.
- **Iola/Stevens Point Area**
  - Trails at Iola Winter Sports Center are in great shape as we enter winter. Leaf blowing is underway to get the excess organic material of the trail so skiing is available with low snow. Standing Rocks park is preparing for winter and looking forward to the first snow fall with improved trail surfaces as well!

Submitted by: Ben Popp

### Equestrians

*With the slow start to the season - Riding season is in full swing, and trails seem to be getting a lot of use!*

*American Trails had a great article that Randy shared with the council on sharing the trails, It has been shared with the equine community, with the suggestion to share with their multi use partners.*

*<https://www.americantrails.org/resources/horses-as-trail-users>*

*National Equestrian Trails Conference in November in Phoenix AZ I will be attending along with 2 others to bring back information on topics including:*

- *Growing your organization*



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- *Getting younger people active in your group*
- *Getting grants to help your group*
- *Having a voice in legislation*
- *Work with local and federal agencies to improve your trails*
- *How to work with other trail users for the benefit of all*
- *Improving your group's trail experience*
- *Preserving, protecting and expanding the trails*

More info about the conference can be found here <http://sharingthetrails.com/index.html>

*Back Country Horseman of Wisconsin is starting to organize work days at several trails and is gaining momentum. Eue Galle has had several work days and seen some great improvements.*

*The group also sent several people to the Trails School and are putting their knowledge to great use!*

*Trails School was a success with 13 students completing the course at Magnolia Bluff County Park. Plans are underway to start the 2019 school.*

*Wisconsin Horse Council continues to work on a brochure to distill down the important information on the Economic Impact Study done by the American Horse Council.*

*WHC is also continuing work on the "share the trail" campaign. We have worked through some of the resistance with information, and still have a few areas that we will continue to work with.*

*Submitted by: Cricket Jewett*

### **ATV/UTV**

Fall riding season is pretty much over as a majority of the ATV UTV trails around Wisconsin close down at the end of October. A few trail networks stay open longer, with a limited number of systems remaining open until the spring break up. Many road route networks remain open year round, while others that are connected with certain trails, close when the trails they are connected with close for the season. Adding to the mix, the ATV UTV community also has select winter trail systems, but like our snowmobile community, these shared systems are often open or closed based on weather and snow pack conditions. Having two different riding and trail network seasons is challenging, thus our organization is focusing more attention on the winter aspect of our systems, especially with the advancement of the Utility Terrain Vehicle that are now coming with cabs and heaters.

As our organization wrapped up our fall season, October was an extremely busy month. During the time period our Trail Patrol Ambassador program had it's first training exercise and integration with Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) and their team of professionals. Our role is offering ground support to the air wing of WEM, with further integration and additional training opportunities forthcoming in 2019. Thus far in the development of this new partnership, our dedicated trail patrol ambassador volunteers with the proper background and credentials, are looking forward to this endeavor as a meaningful way to contribute to the local communities in need of our assets.



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While on the topic of community involvement, October was our Make A Wish Wisconsin ATV UTV fund raiser, with the ride and evening banquet taking place in the Antigo area. With many clubs, businesses and individuals contributing in different ways, this year we raised a little over \$35,000 for this worthwhile organization serving many of our Wisconsin residents in need.

Our last regional meeting of the year took place in the southwestern part of the state where many new clubs are developing as new road routes are growing in popularity. This setting had a good turnout with our host, the Southwestern ATV UTV Alliance, representing 14 clubs in 9 different counties. In years past, this part of the state was lacking in local organizations, this is no longer the case as local clubs continue to form and mature.

Another positive to share, a number of our Trail Patrol Ambassador's did a joint exercise with the new WI DNR Recreational Wardens and a select number of County Recreational Officers in Clark, Jackson and Eau Claire Counties this past fall. Our joint effort goal was to make a visual presence over a busy weekend to educate and enforce rules and proper ethics out on our busy trail networks. The Trail Patrol Ambassador teams serves a different duty than credentialed law enforcement but both activities are educational in nature, working together improves the family riding experiences for everyone.

With our partner organization, the NOHVIS Group, now in full swing, the Trail Patrol Ambassador team rolled out the "Welcome Center" which is designed to interact with even more riders. The initial launch was over the busy Labor Day weekend on the Nicolet Trail in Oconto County. Our Welcome Center consists of highly visible signing with a professional and appropriately logo'ed EZ Up canopy / tent, offering area riding maps, trail cookies and vehicle / rider safety checks with rule books and posters on full display. Three additional Welcome Centers were on display at the September VIP Ride, the Snow / Dirt show at the Barron County Fairgrounds and in Marionette County in conjunction with one of our most active clubs located in Dunbar. These settings are proving to be a very proactive means to communicate and interact with the growing number of riders as the sport continues expanding.

Education, communication and enforcement are integral aspects of managing any type of trail program. Our partner clubs, businesses, the government agencies we work with as well as a number of the OHV industry partners have been very supportive and helpful as we continually improve and expand our management strategies as the ATV UTV program continues growing in numbers and changing demographics.

Submitted by: Randy Harden

### **Snowmobile**

The Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs held its annual Fall Workshops and Convention at Chula Vista Resort on October 26-28. It was attended by over 700 registrants. Miss Snowflake was selected for the coming year. She will be attending snowmobile related events across the State for the next 12 months, supporting and promoting snowmobiling.



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The recipients of the “of the year” awards, selected at the summer meeting, were recognized for their contributions to the sport.

The workshops, which were identified in my previous report, were well attended.

Stephanie Klett, Secretary of the Department of Tourism, was the guest speaker at the general session Saturday morning.

A silent auction was held to raise funds for the AWSC scholarship fund. Over \$4,000 was collected.

The DNR also conducted a Safety Course Instructor Recertification session that was very well received.

Snow shows, swap meets, vintage shows, and grass drag events have taken place across the state, all well attended.

Volunteers are busy preparing our 25,000 miles of snowmobile trail for the impending season. Next year the AWSC will be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of representing Wisconsin's snowmobilers and contributing to our winter economy.

### ***THINK SNOW***

Submitted by: Douglas Johnson

#### **Four-Wheel Drive**

Now that the wheelin' season has slowed down another meeting for a coalition of various main Four Wheel Drive (4WD) groups in Wisconsin is being planned for the end of this year or in January.

No further update on a public 4WD Park. I do know that another private off-road park is in the making, but not sure what it will consist of at this time.

In the Four Wheel Drive Community (FWDC) there are different groups continuing to work on various private properties for trails mostly restricted to their membership. Members clear out trails and maintain them. The landowners are quite pleased with their usage due to the opening up of their land for them so they can utilize more readily access their land. They appreciate the groups concern for the land and keeping it clear of any trash and the help that the owners may need at times. Some of these are becoming very successful!!

The Great Northern Trail Ride was again a success.

One of the big issues recognized is how to get the “virtual social media individuals and clubs” involved and also to take responsibility for their actions. There are those who just don't believe it is an issue to put on social media some of the activities that can be interpreted wrong when taken out of context.



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Looking forward to updated information on the inventorying, classifying and mapping of “roads” on State properties and how to access this information.

Members of various Wisconsin Four Wheel Drive groups have used their vacation this year to go four wheel driving together. Mostly but not limited to out west as far as California, Utah, Arizona and Colorado and thoroughly enjoyed their adventures!!

At the Wisconsin Four Wheel Drive meeting in October we developed a committee in regard to Trail Specs. I am pleased to announce that Joel Kasper will be heading up the Trail Specs program for the FWDC and be the liaison with the DNR. What is of particular interest is the fact that some volunteer members of this committee are from Minnesota who believe very strongly on the need for accessible trails here in Wisconsin. They wish to share their experiences on what has successfully been done in their state.

Submitted by: Luana Schneider

### **Hiking**

The Ice Age Trail has a new record holder for the fastest time to complete the entire Ice Age Trail. Anne Wiess ran the 1,200 miles in 21 days, 18 hours and 7 minutes completing her run on September 30<sup>th</sup> at 1AM.

Both the Ice Age Trail Alliance and the North Country Trail Association in Wisconsin have had extremely busy summers with planned guided hikes and trail improvement projects being held on most weekends. On top of their already planned busy summer schedule, both trails received some significant storm damage from the severe storms that occurred between June and August.

The enormous rain storm which spread across the southern portion of Wisconsin on August 20, 2018 had caused flash flood conditions, followed by a series of tornadoes across Marquette, Green Lake, Fond du Lac, Dodge, Sheboygan, and Manitowoc County on August 31, 2018, damaging some portions of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. The Cross Plains area received about 13” of rain putting a newly constructed trail segment (2 weeks prior) to the ultimate durability test. The new Cross Plains Ice Trail Segment survived the heavy rain fall proving that the high sustainable trail design standards of the Ice Age Trail Alliance do work. Older segments of the Ice Age Trail that were not built to the current Ice Age Trail sustainable design and construction standards did not fare as well.

IATA volunteer crews of sawyers responded on a moment's notice to clear the Ice Age Trail which winds its way through the Kettle Moraine State Forest – Northern Unit. The Parnell Segment near Butler Lake was hit hard. The Trail is passable, although its beauty is a bit compromised in some sections with trees snapped in half.

The North Country Trail was hit hard by the June 16-17 storms that left a wide path of damage and 13” of rain across northern Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. The Rainbow Lakes Wilderness portion of the NCT in the Chequamegon National Forest remains closed due to flooding and storm damage.



## State of Wisconsin **GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL**

A temporary road walk detour has been established. The North Country continued to be hit with flooding all summer as storms produced unusually heavy rain fall amounts followed by significant flooding.

Both the IATA and the NCTA did an excellent job alerting trail users and volunteer of the trail sections that experienced severe storm damage and flooding. Trail volunteers from both organizations responded quickly to establish temporary safe road routes around damaged trail segments as both trails had several long-distance hikers on the trail when the storms hit. Both the IATA and NCTA utilized their Facebook pages and website to post current conditions and alerts. Despite the wet weather, severe storms and the bumper crop of mosquitos, hikers were out enjoying the trails in Wisconsin.

Fall is the busiest time for trail hiking and the trail volunteers are out in force repairing the storm damage of summer to create the best trail experiences possible.

Submitted by: Ken Neitzke

### **Off-highway motorcycles**

The dirt riding season for off-highway motorcycling is coming to a close. The last major riding event this season was November 4<sup>th</sup>. A recent dual sport event in western Dane County using a series of trails on private land hosted close to 350 riders. In October a dual sport ride in the northern Kettle Moraine area was highlighted by some blowing snow during the ride. Other riding events in September in NE WI and the WC WI area were great successes. A regional adventure motorcycling rally was held in August in Boulder Junction. Riders from a wide area enjoyed the riding and recreation of the north woods. A continuing trend is that organized events are selling out very quickly. Sometimes within hours or a few days. This indicates a great deal of unmet demand for off-highway motorcycling opportunities. Once the lakes freeze over many off-highway motorcyclists will convert the tires on their motorcycles so that they can ride on ice. Formal events and casual riding on frozen waters around the state is very popular. We opened a new motorcycle trail in Vilas County in August. This was the first loop of a three loop project. The grand opening was well attended and riders are making good use of this trail opportunity. Layout for the next trail loop is underway with construction scheduled for next summer. We also will be creating some motorcycle trail at the Embarrass ATV Park and Campground. We continue to explore opportunities for new trail projects now that we have a sticker program to generate funds to support trails.

Submitted by: Bryan Much